

THE FESTIVAL OF GOODWILL (THE CHRIST'S FESTIVAL)
New York, June 7, 2009

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Good afternoon and welcome to Festival of Goodwill, which is also known as the Christ's Festival. This festival is held near the time of the full moon of Gemini, which will occur in a few minutes -- at 2:13 PM. The proximity of today's meeting with the actual time of the full moon is special and gives us a wonderful opportunity to work together as a group.

The Festival of Goodwill is a celebration of the spirit of humanity aspiring towards God, seeking conformity with the will of God and dedicated to the expression of right human relations. The Festival is fixed annually in relation to the full moon of June. It is a day when the spiritual and divine natures of mankind are recognized. Since 1952, this Festival has also been observed as World Invocation Day, which is a day of prayer, invocation and meditation throughout the world. It is an invitation to men and women of Goodwill of every spiritual path to join in a universal appeal to divinity and to use the Great Invocation. In doing this, they focus the invocative demand of humanity for light, love and spiritual direction needed to build a world of justice, unity and peace.

For over two thousand years, Christ has represented humanity on this Festival, and has stood before the Hierarchy and in the sight of Shamballa as the God-man, the leader of humanity. The Tibetan Master describes the scene as follows: "Standing in His Own place at a central point in Asia, remote from the throngs and the impact of humanity, Christ will bless the world at the exact moment of the Full Moon of June. He will then repeat the Buddha's last words or sermon, as well as the Beatitudes which He uttered when on earth. To these two messages, the Christ will add a new one, (The Great Invocation – mp) imbued with power for the future." (EXH p 481) Since Christ repeats these three teachings each year at this time, it may be that The Buddha's last sermon, the Beatitudes and the Great Invocation are the cornerstones or guideposts for humanity's spiritual evolution. If we work with these esoteric teachings, it is possible that we will have most of what we need to walk along the path of loving service, which is discipleship.

This afternoon, I thought we might review the sermon of the Buddha, the Beatitudes and the Great Invocation that Christ repeats at this time. I am sure that most of us are familiar with these ancient teachings. However, I have found that there is always an opportunity to gain new insights from the Ancient Wisdom. The Tibetan Master described the Buddha as "The Lord of Light" who addressed the "world of glamour—the world of the astral plane and of emotions—... (and who) undertook to focus in Himself the illumination which would eventually make possible the dissipation of glamour." (EXH p 459) Since there is still much glamour in the world, the Buddha's last sermon is as still relevant to us today. Here is a portion of the Buddha's last sermon found on www.sacred-texts.com.

"Therefore, O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Rely on yourselves, and do not rely on external help. Hold fast to the truth as a lamp. Seek salvation alone in the truth. Look not for assistance to anyone besides yourselves... Herein, O Ananda, let a brother, as he dwells in the body, so regard the body that he...may overcome the grief which arises from the body's cravings. And so, also, when he thinks or reasons, or feels, let him so regard his thoughts that ...he may, whilst in the world overcome the grief which arises from the craving due to ideas, or to reasoning, or to feeling...

Those who, either now or after I am dead, shall be lamps unto themselves, relying upon themselves only and not relying upon any external help, holding fast to the truth as their lamp, and seeking their salvation in the truth alone, and shall not look for assistance to any one besides themselves, it is they, Ananda ...who shall reach the very topmost height! But they must be

anxious to learn....I now exhort you saying: All component things must grow old and be dissolved again. Seek ye for that which is permanent, and work out your salvation with diligence.”

Based on these portions of text, it appears that the Buddha instructs us, through his disciple Ananda, to do four things.

1. Be pro-active in seeking spiritual truth in order to gain enlightenment for ourselves. We cannot experience truth by passively relying on others. The Buddha used a lighted lamp as a symbol of the spiritual truth which guides us on the Path of discipleship.
2. Be mindful of cravings – those of the body as well as the mind and of the emotions. Failure to do this leads to grief, which is the word used in the text. However, the dictionary provides synonyms for grief that may be more descriptive such as: sorrow, misery, heartache. These words describe human suffering. The Buddha therefore gave us the Four Noble Truths that explain the nature of suffering. He then gave us the Noble Eightfold Path, which deal with the attainment of wisdom, ethical conduct and mental development. Following these truths, alleviates suffering and prepares us for point #3...
3. Seek that which is permanent –the inner world of the Soul rather than the glamour of the physical world.
4. Work out your salvation with diligence. The path of discipleship requires focused and consistent effort.

We can see why the Buddha’s last sermon bears repeating until everyone, all of humanity, has taken it to heart.

With respect to the Great Invocation, all of humanity must become aware of this prayer at some time and on some level. The Great Invocation expresses the need for alignment between Shamballa, the Hierarchy and Humanity that will result in the implementation of the divine Plan on Earth. Humanity therefore has a great responsibility as outlined in the fourth stanza of the Great Invocation that reads as follows:

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

The Tibetan Master says that the fourth stanza points out the tie between humanity and three energies: Intelligence, love, and will. Therefore, mankind must actively spread love and light on Earth. (DINA II p.167) In order for this to happen, humanity needs to rid the world of evil, which is defined as selfish desires, hatred, greed, low personal ambitions, love of power and cruelty as well as attitudes of separateness which place barriers between individuals and groups. Only humanity is charged with “closing the door where evil dwells.” These human tendencies will dissipate and right relationships will take place as goodwill and light flow into the minds and hearts of men. Once this is accomplished, great power will be released for restoring the Plan on Earth, which is the final line of the Great Invocation. Given the growing importance of this prayer as one of humanity’s evolutionary cornerstones, I hope everyone here will continue to support the Great Invocation by spreading awareness of World Invocation Day each year.

Before we turn our attention to the Beatitudes of Christ, let’s pause for a few moments because it is almost time for the full moon. Let us have a minute of silence, followed by saying the Great Invocation.

Let us say the Great Invocation in unison, and with one voice.

THE GREAT INVOCATION

From the point of Light within the mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men
May the Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide all little wills of men --
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

OM

OM

OM

Now, let us turn our attention to the Christ and the eight Beatitudes. While the Buddha made the first planetary effort to dispel glamour, the Christ made the first planetary effort to dispel illusion through love. Christ's great teachings given in the Beatitudes are part of The Sermon on The Mount found in the Gospel of Mathew (Chapters 5-7) in the Christian Bible. No one knows when the Gospel of Mathew was written. Scholars believe that it might have been written 70 to 100 years after the death of Jesus. Additionally, we do not know who wrote this gospel or what sources were used to produce the Beatitudes. Some believe the Beatitudes are based on earlier writings by at least one unknown writer called "Q", and some scholars think there is a connection to the Gospel of Thomas, which is not part of the standard Christian Bible. Therefore, since we really do not know exactly what Christ said, we must use what is available to us to obtain a sense of the importance of the Beatitudes

I will now read the eight Beatitudes from the King James Version. Since St. Thomas was mentioned as a possible source, I will also provide quotes from the Gospel of Thomas.*

1. **Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** In the Gospel of Thomas it says: *Congratulations to the person who has toiled and has found life.* (58)
2. **Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.** .. In the Gospel of Thomas it says: *Congratulations to those who are alone and chosen, for you will find the (Father's) domain. For you have come from it, and you will return there again.* (49)
3. **Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.** In the Gospel of Thomas it says: "Be passersby." (42)
4. **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.** In the Gospel of Thomas, it says: *"Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and will rule over all."*(2-4)

* The Text of the Gospel of Thomas from the [Scholars Version](http://www.westarinstitute.org/Polebridge/Excerpts/thomas.html) translation published in the [Complete Gospels](http://www.westarinstitute.org/Polebridge/Excerpts/thomas.html)
www.westarinstitute.org/Polebridge/Excerpts/thomas.html

5. **Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.** In the Gospel of Thomas it says: “Love your friends like your own soul. Protect them like the pupil of your eye.” (25)
6. **Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.** In the Gospel of Thomas, it says: “*Congratulations to those who have been persecuted in their hearts. They are the ones who have truly come to know the Father.*”(69)
7. **Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called Sons of God.** In the Gospel of Thomas: *If two make peace with each other in a single house, they will say to the mountain, ‘Move from here!’ and it will move.*” (48)
8. **Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

The Beatitudes cause us pause and to consider the esoteric teachings conveyed in these ancient writings. For example, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called Sons of God.” I believe President Obama recently used this quote in his speech in Egypt. Esoterically, what is a peacemaker? What is required to give a peacemaker recognition as a Son of God? Perhaps esoterically, a peacemaker is someone who works within himself to bring the personality into alignment with the soul thus creating a single entity through which great spiritual power flows, or the “single house” mentioned by St. Thomas, when he said: “*If two make peace with each other in a single house, they will say to the mountain, ‘Move from here!’ and it will move.*” Therefore, “*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called Sons of God.*”

Another Beatitude that is dear to many people is: “*Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.*” The usual synonyms for the word “meek” are docile, gentle, mild mannered. However, I found another synonym that has esoteric relevance. The word is “tame.” “Tame” means bringing something from a wild state to a domesticated or controlled state. The quote from the Gospel of Thomas provides additional insight into this beatitude. He encourages us to “be passersby.” As passersby, we have the attitude of the “Observer,” which has a higher level of control than the tame beast. The attitude of the Observer is one of detachment. In *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (page 101), the Tibetan Master said: “...the attitude of the Observer...is developed through the attainment of detachment—the detachment ...from all desires and longings which concern the separated self.” Therefore, by controlling the separated self, we take over the physical being or “inherit” the earth. So, when you ponder on this beatitude, “Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the Earth,” you might want to consider meekness in a higher sense, as the controlled detachment of the “Observer.”

In addition to reciting these cornerstone teachings at the time of the full moon, Christ also synthesizes all of the great energies that were initiated during the Festival of Wesak, and which he absorbed and held in trust for distribution at the Festival of Goodwill. The Christ then releases these energies and sends them forth as one great “down-pouring of spiritual energy” that flows through all of humanity as goodwill in action.

With all of these thoughts in mind, let us begin our guided meditation, “Letting in the Light.